

In An Instant

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Summary: Olivia is involved in an accident and is nearly killed. However, she manages to stay alive and gets to the hospital. She thinks things are going to be fine. But things go in the wrong direction when she finds out that she has an irreversible injury. Set between season 5 and 6. Bensler.

1. Chapter 1

It was like any other day at the SVU: busy and noisy. For Olivia Benson-Stabler, life was even busier at home being a wife and mother to her two children and five stepchildren. But today, her life would be changed forever. All because of careless and drunk driving.

Elliot Stabler had gone into work early, so he had taken the second car. Olivia stayed behind to work on some paperwork, since it was due by the end of the day. She yawned as she picked up the next folder. She just wanted to go home and spend time with her family.

Finally, after about two hours, she sent Elliot a text saying she had finished the paperwork and was leaving the SVU. She set the paperwork down on Cragen's desk, headed over to the reception desk, signed herself out, and then got in her car.

She pulled out of the parking lot and started driving towards the freeway. Once she got on it, traffic was light and it was smooth sailing.

Until she heard the sound of a car screeching coming from behind her. She turned her head and saw a car barreling towards her. She swung into the next lane and hit the brakes. But she wasn't quick enough.

The other car slammed into hers at 80 miles an hour. She lost control of the vehicle and slammed into the center divider. She flew forward,

but her seat belt kept her from going through the window. Her car was a complete mess of crushed metal and broken glass and she was trapped inside. She couldn't find her cell phone. She only hoped that someone would report the accident and call for help.

Within ten minutes, she heard the sound of sirens off in the distance. She breathed a sigh of relief, knowing that someone had called for help.

She then heard the sound of footsteps outside.

"Hello? Anyone in here?" a voice said.

"YES!" Olivia shouted as best as she could. "Please help me! I'm trapped."

"Alright, ma'am, we're going to get you out of there."

A light was shone in her face.

"We found the victim. White female, looks like early 40s, possible life-threatening injuries. We're going to need the Jaws of Life to get her out of there," the same voice said.

Fifteen minutes later, the Jaws of Life was brought to the car and was able to lift Olivia out. She was strapped to a gurney and had an IV line placed in her arm.

"Found some ID," the second paramedic, picking it up and reading what was inside. "Oh, she's Special Victims Unit. Alright, Olivia, we're going to take you to the hospital to get checked out."

She was loaded into the ambulance. Five minutes later, it pulled up to the hospital and the paramedics rushed her inside.

"What do we have?" the nurse said.

"This is Olivia. She was involved in a car accident. Her blood pressure is 130/90 and her heart rate is 150. Oxygen is 98 percent," the first paramedic replied. "Possible injuries to her back and abdomen."

"Alright, get her a CT scan right now."

Olivia was whisked down the hall and towards the machine. If she had serious injuries, they needed to be identified as soon as possible.

The nurse found the doctor who had just taken over Olivia's case.

"Does she have any family?" the nurse-Jamie Morrison-asked.

"Let me check," Dr. Sherman said. He asked the desk receptionist to type in the information. "Yes. She has a husband and two children, along with a half-brother."

"Call her husband and have him get down here. He should say his goodbyes now in case she doesn't make it."

* * *

><p>Elliot was at home putting the kids to bed when the phone rang.<p>

"Hello?" he asked.

"Yes, is this Elliot Stabler?" the person responded.

"This is he. May I ask who's calling?"

"Mr. Stabler, I'm Dr. Sherman from NYU Langone Medical Center. Your wife was brought here not too long ago."

"Oh my gosh, is she ok?"

"There's a chance that she might not make it. She was involved in a car accident and paramedics had to use the Jaws of Life to get her out."

"I'll be right down there."

Elliot ended the call, grabbed both of the kids, and ran out to the car. Ten minutes later, he arrived at the hospital and asked for Olivia.

"She's about to go in for surgery," Jamie said.

Olivia was brought out to the waiting room.

"Liv!" Elliot cried out once he saw his wife. "Are you alright?"

She weakly lifted her thumb up.

"I love you so much. I'm not going anywhere."

Both kids said what might be their last goodbyes. Olivia used her last bit of energy to wave goodbye to her family before she went unconscious due to anesthesia.

* * *

><p>While waiting for news on her condition, Elliot received a phone call from Fin.<p>

"Hey Fin, what's up?" Elliot asked.

"I just talked to a guy who was injured in a car accident. He appears somewhat intoxicated. We were called out to the scene not too long ago."

"Olivia was hit by a car. She's in surgery now."

"WHAT?!"

"Yea. That's what the doctor told me."

"Then the guy I talked to must be the one who hit her."

"And you said he was intoxicated?"

"Yes."

"I hate this guy. He was drunk and hit Olivia's car. Now she's in the hospital possibly going to die."

"She's a fighter. She'll get through just fine. Stay positive. We'll be over as soon as we take this guy back to the station."

* * *

><p>Elliot had fallen asleep in the ER. The kids were curled up on chairs next to him, sleeping as well. The team-Munch, Fin, Cragen, Alex, Melinda, Casey, and George all arrived at the hospital and were wanting to find out how Olivia was doing.<p>

Dr. Sherman walked into the room. The whole team looked up and saw the somewhat grim look on his face and knew that something wasn't right.

"Mr. Stabler, may I please speak to you alone for a minute?" the doctor asked.

Elliot stood up and made Alex in charge of looking after the little ones. He followed the doctor down the hall and stopped just before Olivia's room.

"Mr. Stabler, I'm afraid I have some bad news. But there's also some good news."

Elliot's face became white.

"The surgery was a success. She has been moved to ICU, where she'll be monitored for a couple of days. She did have a broken wrist, but we were able to fix it. She'll have to rest for two to three weeks and then she'll have to go to physical therapy for a few weeks in order to regain movement in her hand. She had some cuts on her back and abdomen from the glass, but we removed the pieces and stitched the skin. They will heal nicely and the scars should not be too visible."

"That's good to hear. But what's the bad news?"

"I'm sorry, but we did everything we could. The damage was done at the scene of the accident."

"What damage?"

"A piece of metal was lodged in her back and embedded itself into her spinal cord. It was completely severed at vertebrae L1 and L2. I'm sorry, but your wife is a paraplegic and will never be able to walk again."

Elliot felt his throat closing around him. Olivia was paralyzed. She would never be able to go out into the field again, even when she got released from the hospital. How was he going to tell her the news if the doctors hadn't told her yet?

Elliot walked into his wife's room and found her hooked up to a machine. She had woken up and was looking at her surroundings. He

noticed the wheelchair and knew that he was going to have to break the news to her.

"Elliot?" she said.

"Hey," he replied. "How are you feeling?"

"Like I got hit by a truck and...what? My legs! I can't feel my legs! What is happening?!"

Elliot felt the tears run down his face.

"Olivia, the doctor told me that you are never going to walk again."

"What?" she asked. "What are you talking about?"

"You were paralyzed in the accident. The doctors did everything they could, but your spinal cord has been completely severed."

"NO! This can't be!" she said, crying. "I'm never going to be able to do my job properly anymore."

"We're going to think of something. And I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to stay by your side until death do us part. I mean it. I still love you the same."

2. Chapter 2

After receiving the devastating news, Olivia decided to go to sleep. But she ended up crying for about 20 minutes. Elliot held her hand and stroked her arm comfortingly. The team had sent him some texts asking him how Olivia was.

He texted back saying that she was resting for a while. He told them about her injuries, but left out the part about her being paralyzed. He figured that she would want to tell the others when she was ready.

Two days later, Olivia was released from the hospital. She was told by her doctor that she would need physical therapy for a couple of weeks to help her hand heal.

She hadn't taken a shower since she had been brought to the hospital, so she was going to take one when she got home.

"Cragen gave you a month off," Elliot told her as she was wheeling herself out to the car. "He knows that you need time to heal."

"Did you tell him about my...paralysis?" Olivia asked. "It really hurts to say the word."

"No, I didn't. I figured you would want to tell him when you're ready."

Olivia's first physical therapy appointment was scheduled for tomorrow. She was not used to the fact that she was unable to use the lower half of her body.

She reached the car and was able to use her arms to push herself onto the passenger seat. Elliot folded the wheelchair and set it in the back seat. He hurried over to the driver's seat, turned on the ignition, and began to drive home.

* * *

><p>Once he pulled into the driveway and parked the car, he immediately grabbed the wheelchair and prepared to help Olivia into the chair.<p>

Completely forgetting about her paralysis for a second-a force of habit-she prepared to get out of the car and walk up to the house.

Olivia felt the lower half of her body immediately collapse and Elliot caught her before she fell onto the ground.

"Olivia, what are you doing? You could have gotten hurt," he said.

"I already am," she replied. "I completely forgot that I can't use anything below my hips."

The tears began to fall again. Her life was about to become more complicated since she couldn't walk. She was also going to have to use a catheter when she needed to go to the bathroom.

Elliot carried her over to her chair and she wheeled herself up to the front steps. Then he helped her onto the front steps and after unlocking the front door, helped her into the house.

"How am I supposed to move on from this?" Olivia asked her husband. "It's not like I can do my job anymore."

"Don't say that," Elliot replied. "You will still be able to do your job. There are many things you can do."

"It's not like I can chase after suspects or hurt them after I learn what they've done to other people."

"I promise you that that man who did this to you is going to pay for what he's done. He won't be getting a light sentence."

Elliot dialed Fin.

"What's up, Stabler?" the latter asked.

"Do you have the guy's information? The one you arrested for being under the influence?"

"Yes. I just texted you the info. Why?"

"Because I'm going to have a nice chat with him. He needs to know how badly he hurt Olivia and how it won't be easy for him to get a light sentence. I'll be there in fifteen minutes."

"Where are you going?" Olivia asked once Elliot hung up the phone.

"I'm going to go have a nice chat with the guy who put you in that chair. I'm going to tell him what happened to you," Elliot said.

"Please be careful. I don't want you to lose your job."

"I will."

* * *

><p>Elliot decided to bring Olivia in the car with him because he didn't know if he should leave her alone, considering that she was barely beginning to adjust to life in a wheelchair. He signed in by showing off his credentials and then headed down to the interrogation room, where the suspect was already handcuffed and sitting behind the table. Elliot requested that the conversation would be muted.<p>

The detective entered the room with a look of pure anger on his face.

"Woah, man, I already told the other detectives that I was sorry. I was guilty of driving under the influence. I will accept my sentence," the man said.

"Yea, well, an apology is not going to be enough for me. It will never be enough for me."

"What are you talking about? I didn't do anything to you!"

"You nearly killed my wife because of your reckless and drunk driving. She is now in a wheelchair for the rest of her life because of what you've done."

"What? I'm sorry."

"Don't say that. She is never going to walk again and is going to face challenges that come with her irreversible injury. I'm going to make sure your sentence is longer because of what you did to my wife."

Elliot left the room and instructed the officers to take the man back to his prison cell. After finishing up at the Precinct, Elliot headed back out to the car so that he could go get some food. He asked Olivia if she wanted anything to eat, to which she said, "French Fries."

The couple got their food and headed back home. Olivia ended up resting on the couch for the rest of the day and watched TV. She was ready to go to her physical therapy appointment tomorrow and wanted nothing more than to go back to work. Even though chasing suspects was no longer an option, she still wanted to solve cases and make sure that people got justice for their loved ones. But she didn't know what Cragen would say once he saw her wheelchair.

Once inside, Olivia wheeled herself over to the couch and settled down to have a nap. She just wanted to cry and wish her life would go back to normal.

End

file.